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ART. I.—*Specimen of the Burmese Drama, translated by J. SMITH, Esq, communicated by C. A. BLUNDELL, Esq. Commissioner, &c., Moulmein.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to send you a translation of a play, which notwithstanding its trifling vein, may attract the notice of the curious, as exemplifying the popular tone of the Burman drama. The Ramadzat, (Ramahyana) and other ancient fabulous histories, form the groundwork of nearly all the favourite plays, the outline of the story being merely preserved, while the language of the play depends as much upon the fancy of the performer as the taste of the audience. Each company is presided over by a teacher or manager, who drills the actors in their tasks from rough notes which contain only the songs and the substance of the parts assigned to each performer. In every play, without perhaps a single exception, the following characters are represented—a King, a Queen, a Princess, a Minister of State, a Huntsman, and some kind of Monster. The female characters are usually personated by men, it being considered indecorous in a woman to appear as an actress. I have to plead as an apology for the unpolished style of this translation, the acknowledged difficulty of turning the dialogue of a play into a foreign dress; more-over the original, which was written from the mouth of an actor, was imperfect and ill-written. I believe there are books in the palace at Umerapooree, containing the proper reading of all the approved plays and the costumes of the characters, which are placed near the

members of the royal family whenever they call their companies before them, but I have not been able to discover any work of this description here.

Yours sincerely,

J. SMITH.

To C. A. BLUNDELL, Esq.

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*The Argument.*

The nine princesses of the city of the silver mountain, which is separated from the abode of mortals by a triple barrier (the first being a belt of prickly cane, the second a stream of liquid copper, and the third a *Beloo*, or devil) gird on their enchanted zones, which give them the power of traversing the air with the speed of a bird, and visit a pleasant forest within the limits of the south island (earth.) While bathing in the lake, they are surprised by a huntsman, who snares the youngest with his magic noose, and carries her to the young prince of Pyentsa, who is so much struck by her surprising beauty, that he makes her his chief queen, though he has but lately been united to the daughter of the head astrologer of the palace. Being obliged soon after to take the field against some rebels, the astrologer seizes advantage of the prince's absence to misinterpret a dream, which the king calls upon him to explain; and declares that the evil spirit, whose influence is exerting itself against the king's power, is only to be appeased by the sacrifice of the beautiful Mananhurree, who has supplanted his daughter in the young prince's affections. The prince's mother hearing of the offering about to be made, visits the lovely Mananhurree and restores to her the enchanted zone which had been picked up on the shore-edge of the lake by the huntsman, and presented by him to the old queen. The princess immediately returns to the silver mountain; but on her way thither, she stops at the hermitage of a recluse, who lives on the borders of the delightful forest before mentioned, and gives to the old man a ring and some drugs, which confer the power upon the possessor of them of entering the barrier and passing unharmed through its dangers. The young prince having put an end to the war, returns to the city of Pyentsa, and finding his favourite queen gone, he instantly sets forth in quest of her. Having come to the forest, the appearance of which astonishes and delights him, he dismisses his followers and visits the hermit, who delivers to him the ring and the drugs; he then enters the frightful barrier, and after meeting with many adventures, arrives at the city of the silver mountain, and makes known his presence to his beautiful bride by dropping the ring into a vessel of water, which one of the palace damsels is conveying into the bath of the princess.

## PERSONS.

*The King of Pyentsa.*

*The King of the city of the silver mountain.*

*Thoodanoo, the Prince of Pyentsa.*

*A skilful Huntsman.*

*An Astrologer.*

*A Hermit.*

*The Queen of Pyentsa.*

*Mananhurree, the daughter of the King of the silver mountain, and wife to Thoodanoo.*

*Noblemen, Generals, Guards, Ladies of the Palace, &c., &c.*

## PYENTSA.

## ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*Four Noblemen sitting in the Palace of Audience.*

*1st Noble.* My lords, let us not be false or neglectful to our royal master, to whom we have so many times sworn allegiance; we bear the weight of government on our shoulders, and constitute the strength of the country,—How shall we conduct affairs, so as to extend his authority, and benefit the state?

*2nd Noble.* True, my lords; let me explain to you whence our noble monarch sprung. In the distant beginning, after the earth had been destroyed successively by fire, by wind, and by water, the lily which sprung from its bosom blossomed, and produced fine embryo deities, on which account the celestial beings bestowed upon this system the title of Battakat. The various incidents that have occurred from first to last, among the four divisions of the human race, are voluminously recited in the 49000 volumes of the History of Kings, but I will merely give you a sketch. The nine beings who descended from the visible heavens, having eaten of the fragrant earth, peopled it after the manner of mortals;—in process of time, the inhabitants began to use deceit towards each other, to pillage, to steal, and to strive amongst themselves continually; and in order to put an end to these calamities by instruction and discipline, the embryo deity Mahathamata came, and was hailed by the voice of the whole people. This was the first.

*3rd Noble.* When the millions of worlds had sunk under the influence of fire, air, and water—when the four grand divisions of the creation had been rent asunder—when the system had been again restored, and set in motion—the emerald-leaved lily sprung up, and gave forth from each of its fine blossoms the eight articles of clerical

use ; then the beings of the celestial regions understanding the sign regarding the five embryo deities, called this world on which we live Batta (kat).—Is it not so, my lords ?

*4th Noble.* My friends ; in the palace of audience, the thirty-three images of superior beings and the images of lions are keeping watch over the throne—the gold, the silver, the emeralds, the flowers, the sapphires, the topazes, and the rubies, are glittering among the other emblems of royalty—the umbrella of state is being spread—the noblemen are in attendance in their robes and helmets—the sovereign of the golden palace is arraying himself in his royal habiliments—the procession will soon be formed to the music of the silver gong, the golden bell, and the celestial harp and lute, and issue forth headed by the four grand divisions of the royal army, marching to the sound of the martial drums ;—Let us therefore listen in silence for the warning of the five silver gongs.

[*The royal procession enters.*

*King.* From the period when the system was destroyed by fire, air, and water, and again renewed, the dynasty which has produced five valorous monarchs has descended unbroken to me, the sovereign of the south island : Are the people happy in the remotest hamlet of my possessions ?

*Noble.* Oh, wearer of the jewelled crown, who unfurleth the royal umbrella, and sitteth on the throne, guarded by rows of lions ! the hundred subject kings are in attendance with their daughters.

*King.* Represent to the sun of the world, truly and quickly, what you have to say.

*Noble.* Oh, king of the universe, whose merit is matured ; whose glory is increasing ; whose august coronation has been celebrated ; whose merchants and rich men go hither and thither under the royal protection ; whose markets, rivers, rivulets, and lesser streams are crowded with people, canoes, and boats passing to and fro ; whose royal staff being set up is surrounded by thousands of people going and coming ; whose officers of customs, guards, and ferry-men keep watch at the landing places—the Governor of the sea-ward provinces sends a dispatch to the golden city, the contents of which shall be truly conveyed into the royal ear.

## ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*City of the silver mountain. The nine princesses in the palace with their attendants.*

*Princesses.* Shory Tsa ! Shory Phee !—ye wise waiting women, who live under the shadow of the single pillared abode of royalty, come with us to the country of Pyentsa.

SCENE 2nd.—*The grove on the borders of the country of Pyentsa.*

SONG.

Oh, bright are the flowers that carpet this vale,  
 And yield their sweet breath to the murmuring gale;  
 Bright flowers!—fragrant zephyrs!—how sweet, 'tis to rove,  
 In this Eden of pleasure—this garden of love.

*The Princesses having taken off their enchanted zones, bathe themselves in the lake.*

[*Enter Huntsman.*

*Hunts.* Now, skilful ranger, enter thou the dense forest, and try to discover where the beasts of the chase are most numerous. Let me go quickly, but cautiously.—Ah! what abundance of hares, elks, elephants, leopards, tigers, wild cows, bisons, and bears; there are harpies too, and unicorns, swans, *huoungs*, peacocks, and monkeys frisking about from place to place. Well; this is indeed a wonderful place.—[*He discovers the Princesses bathing.*] Ah! what creatures are these? Mortals, or celestials?—I must instantly entrap one of them with my magic noose, and ascertain what they really are.—[*He casts the noose, and snares Mananhurree, the youngest.*]

*Manan.* Oh, my royal sisters! save me, save me.

*Hunts.* Tell me, maiden, art thou a mortal, or a being of a superior order? Speak quickly, I pray you, and relieve me from my doubts.

*Manan.* I am the daughter of the king whose palace is in the city of the silver mountain, and came hither with my companions to play. Release me, for I am afraid.

*Hunts.* If so, I shall have my fortune made, for I will carry you this moment to the court of Pyentsa, sweet maiden, and present you to the young prince.

[*Music.*

SCENE 3rd.—*Pyentsa. The palace.*

*Enter Huntsman leading in the young Mananhurree to the Prince.*

*Hunts.* Oh, prince, the lord of life and wealth; having but just now snared a palace-fostered maiden of a delicate and gentle form, I have brought her without delay to the golden foot.

*Prince.* [To *Manan.*] Be not concerned, sweet palace-born child, I could exist with you for ever. Wait; I will hasten to my royal sire and petition him to let me make you my chief queen.

*Manan.* Do with me, my lord, as you say.

## ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*The Hall of the Palace. King, nobles.*

*King.* Nobles of the palace!

*Noble.* Lord!

*King.* Why fails the prince Thoodanoo to come into the presence?

*Noble.* Oh, ruler of a hundred subject kings,—whose light is like the sun of the universe; he has but even now wedded the daughter of the philosopher Naythoda. The governor of Setang, and the chiefs of Siam and Cochin-China, who have heretofore annually brought tribute, and presents of ingots of gold and silver, white and red cloths, velvets, bales of cloths, gold and silver lace, and gold and silver flowers, have now failed in their duty. Nor is this the limit of their folly; they are making encroachments upon the frontier, and in the pride of their hearts are destroying the villages, and oppressing the people. The confusion which they have created is so great that the inhabitants are afraid to remain on the frontier; an ambassador has only now reached from the Tsaubwas.

*King.* If this is true, call the lord of the east house (eldest son), and let him appear forthwith!

[*Music.*

SCENE 2nd.—

*Noble.* Oh my lord, &c. &c. &c. &c.

*Prince.* Say, what thou hast to say.

*Noble.* The royal sire has sent to command your presence.

*Prince.* If I am called, I will but take a glance into the mirrors and adjust my turban, and come with you at once into the audience chamber.

SCENE 3rd.—*The Hall of Audience. Prince, nobles.*

*Prince.* My lords, tell me, who am the royal son, whose glory is like the sun of day, who enlightens the four islands; whose renown is universally spread; whether the imperial father—the embryo deity whose white umbrella is unfurled—has yet entered the palace of audience;—tell me, too, if the royal mother, who reclineth upon the throne of lilies, has yet displayed her golden countenance, and is well?

## SONG.

Wrought o'er with gems, and regal gold,  
 And glitt'ring flow'rs in ev'ry fold,  
 There stately canopies reveal,  
 To kings, who hither come to kneel,  
 The boundless riches of our land,  
 Whose rocks are rubies,—gold its sand.  
 In all the southern world beside,  
 There is not such a land of bliss;  
 Where'er the ocean rolls its tide,  
 It comes not to a shore like this;  
 Delicious odours fill the air,  
 And mirth and love reign every where.

[*The King enters.*

*Prince.* Oh, mighty father, this lion-hearted son, when he received the imperial order, placed it upon his head, and hastened to obey it.

*King.* My second self, my son Thoodanoo!

*Prince.* My lord.

*King.* The people of the whole country, the rebellious wretches, are up like flames of fire—go, and exterminate them.

*Prince.* (I have heard that) Setang, Siam, and Cochin-China, not fearing the golden sword, are in open rebellion. It is nothing. They seek a quarrel, and the golden son will root up the whole race, without making use of the weapons of war;—he will but publish forth the king's glorious title, and they are gone.

*King.* Good, my son; go forth and repay to me the favours I have bestowed upon you. Let Cochin-China be your first point of assault, and return not till you come as a conqueror.

*Prince.* I will reverently obey the royal command, and make the golden cause conspicuous.

SCENE 4th.—*The Prince's palace.*

*Prince to Mananhurree.* Delicate creature; silver palace-born beauty; whose charms are so surpassingly wonderful; I must go with the army which marches with to-morrow's dawn.

*Manan.* Oh, my lord, why will you thus desert me? You are my only protector here, at once my father, and my husband. If indeed you have resolved to abandon me, I must bear the fate that awaits me.

*Prince.* It must not be so, pride of my soul. I must not neglect the duty which a child owes its parent : moreover, consider, I beseech you, that I am nearest the throne, and must yield to the custom of my country, and lead the army against the rebels.

*Manan.* Alas ! If you possess so little affection for me, as to leave me here alone, I must submit to my evil destiny.

*Prince.* [To his Noble.] Hear you not my lord ? She does not say, stay ; nor does she desire me to go !—she weeps !—her tears and smiles are so fascinating, that I shall be vanquished ; her tears are like sparkling drops of dew upon the leaf of the lily ; whenever I look upon them, I have not resolution enough to go.

*Noble.* Let me explain to your highness. The princess is here without friends ; if you desert her, she will be as much alone as the *kynneya* without its mate ; she will be confounded with her lot, and will be no more than a waxen image. There is indeed no necessity for your departure, and leaving her here in tears.

*Prince.* Alas ! If I avoid this campaign, I shall have my name held up to the scorn and contempt of posterity. The king, my father, will be enraged against me if I do not accompany the army. Oh, I must indeed depart. Then this friendless one ! when left alone, will break her heart, and I shall be left destitute. I am in a painful dilemma, (like a bamboo between two boards) ! I may as well swallow poison, or throw myself into a furnace. If I petition the king to allow me to remain at home, he will order me to do so ; but after what I have already promised it will be improper to ask !—then she will not die !—she will only waste away. I will join the army ;—caparison my elephant Mengala, and bring him to the palace, and the lord of the golden universe will depart.

SCENE 5th.—*The Prince's Palace. Princess, attendants.*

*Manan.* Mala, Maensa ! my faithful maidens come hither ; for the time of my pregnancy is completed.

*Maensa.* [To the Treasurer.] Here is our royal mistress at the time.

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[*The child is born.*]

*Treas.* I must hasten to the camp, and communicate the tidings to the royal ear.

ACT.

*Camp.*

*Treas.* Oh, my lord ! the empress sovereign of the state !

*Prince.* Speak, my lord.



*Trea.* I am come to communicate to the golden ear, that the Princess Manan has been delivered of a son.

*Prince.* Then I will forthwith return, and look upon my little son.

## ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*The Prince's palace.*

*Prince.* Gem of my heart, tell me! tell me, if you are well!

*Manan.* I am well, my lord.

*Prince.* [*To his lord in waiting.*] Make known to all the army, that the little prince has received the name of Moug Shory Gyew. [*To the princess.*] Pure leaf of silver, captivating creature, picture of softness and beauty, mother of our babe—stay but for a brief space with your companions, my concubines, in the palace, and I will again be with you in three months.

*Manan.* Pray do not be concerned about me, my lord, I will stay here; commence your journey, and be true to me.

*Prince.* You say well, my rose tree, but it is not my own wish to depart; I must obediently perform my sire's command; of course I must not avoid my duty.

SCENE 2nd.—*The Prince's palace. Princess, attendants.*

*Manan.* Oh, my maids; the little prince is now seven days old, let us place him in the emerald cradle and rock him (to sleep.)

## SONG.

Gently let us rock the swing,  
And hush to sleep the baby king:  
Palace maidens—softly sing,  
(*Chorus*) And lull to sleep the baby king.

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Coolly let the palace rose  
In his jewell'd couch repose:—  
Persuasive voices, hither bring,  
(*Chorus*) And lull to sleep the baby king.

SCENE 3rd.—*Palace of Audience.*

*King.* Oh, wise ministers, who continually wait in my presence like the seven mountains which surround the lake Nandat!—I have dreamt that the country of Pyentsa was surrounded by my intestines, and that the sun and moon descended from the firmament and fell into my lap. Explain quickly what this means.

*Noble.* Oh, king of the golden palace, whose glory is great, the Brahmin Naythoda, whose place is near the throne, will be able to understand the dream.

*King.* Call hither the Brahmin Naythoda. [*Naythoda and his disciple enter*] Oh, learned teacher, I have dreamed that my bowels surrounded the country of Pyentsa, and that the sun and the moon fell at my feet. Show me the interpretation of this thing.

*Naythoda.* It is well, Oh benefactor!—let me but consult my astrological tables; [*he consults his scheme,*] one from one—nothing; nine from one—nothing; two and five.—I have made the calculation—[*the Pawn tumbles in the water,*] Oh! are there nine, or one? [*To his scholar,*] The benefactor dreams propitiously, but I will divine unfavourably. [*To the King,*] The benefactor, the lord of life and property, must sacrifice to the Yeet spirit one hundred fowls, and one hundred hogs, and it will be appeased.

*King.* Is this all, Oh teacher?

*Nay.* Lord of the earth, I am afraid to—

*King.* Say on, learned teacher, without regard to any one; only let myself and the chief queen be exempt.

*Nay.* Oh! benefactor, cut the throat of that celestial spirit who is like the *kynneya*, and offer up her blood before the Yeet Nat. [*To his disciple,*] Close the doors of the prince's palace on all sides, for so is the king's command.

SCENE 4th.—*The Prince's palace. Princess, attendants.*

*Manan.* Oh, my faithful women, Mala! Maensa! go and take your rest. My doors are closed, and my blood is to be poured out before the Yeet spirit—must it indeed be so? Oh, my absent lord, our son Moug Shory Gyew is yet an infant.

SONG.

[*Enter the Prince's Mother.*

*Queen.* Oh, daughter of the pleasing countenance! here is your enchanted zone;—take it, and escape to the city of the silver mountain.

*Manan.* Thanks, royal madam; thrice I salute you reverently.

SONG.

ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*At the hermitage of a recluse who lives on the boundary which divides the earth from the country of the silver mountain.*

*Princess. Recluse.*

*Manan.* Holy hermit, should the Prince of Pyentsa come hither, deliver, I pray you, this ring and these drugs into his hand.

## ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*The Prince's camp.*

*Prince.* By the strength of this arm have I made my father's glory great. Cause my elephant Yauoung to be caparisoned, for the princess Dwaynow's lord will return to the city of Pyentsa.

*Noble.* My lord !

*Prince.* Let the golden spearsmen, swordsmen, and the golden shield-bearers and armour-bearers be set in order, and the four grand divisions of the imperial army.

*Noble.* They are so, my lord.

*Prince.* Good general, the princess Manan, who keeps her court in the north palace, will bend her head in watching for my return like the golden lily shaken by the wind—she will droop with fatigue, let us therefore make long marches.

SCENE 2nd.—*Camp near Pyentsa. The army returning.*

*Prince.* Oh, my lord, I cannot sleep;—when the army reaches the garden near the city, let the artillery discharge a salute.

SCENE 3rd.—*The Prince's palace. Matrons, waiting women.*

*1st Lady.* Our royal mistress upon hearing of the plot against her life, fled to the city of the silver mountain—we shall all without exception undergo the royal punishment.—Hear you not the voice of the great guns? Let us go forth and meet the returning army.

*Camp.*

*Prince.* Oh, sweet ladies Mala, Maensa ! the princess Manan, where is she? The charming mother of our infant son—where is she gone?

*Matron.* I will explain, my lord, about the princess, to whom I gave the same care, as to this hair I daily dress—she who was the celestial spirit of the palace, oh king of the city of the sun.

The royal father having had a dream sent for the astrologer, who cherishing resentment and malice towards your highness, purposed to offer up the mother of Shory Gyew as a sacrifice to the Yeet Nat, upon hearing of which she forsook the palace and returned to her own country.

*Prince.* Ah ! The love that is felt for the father should be extended to the child. I was absent; would that I had been present ! My little son Moug Shory Gyew has not even quitted his mother's breast !—I have had no regard paid to me in my absence—Manan and myself are one. I am the head of this royal line, my son Shory Gyew

is the king's grandson, and my queen was his daughter-in-law. ——  
Let me brood over all this! ——I swear, by the sacred books, that  
I will remain here no longer. Oh, attendants! every one of ye! let  
none be absent! ——the lord of the mundane circle will jour-  
ney towards the silver mountain,—let the huntsman be called into  
the presence.

*Noble.* Thy servant, the huntsman, has been called, and is now  
here.

*Prince.* Oh! quickly show the golden prince, who rules this  
universe, the land they call the silver mount, whence came the mother  
of my son; and quickly show the rural lake, in which thou did'st  
thy captive take.

*Hunts.* The country of the silver mount! I know not where it is,  
my lord.

*Prince.* Then quickly bring me to the delicious pool in which  
thou foundest the mother of Shory Gyew—the prince has never yet  
been there. Oh huntsman rise, without delay, and bring the prince  
upon the way.

*Hunts.* My lord, I will begone.

## ACT.

*They enter the Haywonta Forest.*

## SONG.

These plashing colours surely come,  
Reflected from the upper sky,  
Where Tawadyn's celestial dome,  
Is hidden from the mortal eye.

*Prince.* Look, my lords, at the delightful bath of the mother of  
Moung Gyew! how beautiful the flower trees that grow upon its  
banks, and what a delicious perfume they diffuse through the forest;  
the woods are dense with leaves, which form a dusky shade in which  
are sporting butterflies, beetles, and bees. Water-quail, kingfishers,  
and pheasants nestle beneath the shadow of those golden lilies. How  
pleasant and exhilarating, my good huntsman.

*Hunts.* True, my lord, indeed most pleasant; I dare not venture  
to number all the beautiful flowers that grow in the lake.

*Prince.* I see by your countenance, that if I demand their names  
you will be wearied in telling them.—You may now make your way  
back to the city.

*Prince.* [*Alone*] Oh, my dear lost wife! take me with you, for I am in grief, or in a little time I shall be like one that is dead.—I must subdue my longing! Oh, divine beauty, dear to me as this life! Twice has her voice reached my ear, crying, husband, husband!—Oh let my fate like Ramas be, who lost and found his lovely bride; let Manan be restored to me!

## SONG.

This spot must surely be like the region through which flow the seven celestial rivers;—dragons, galongs, and spirits must here abound, as well as devotees and hermits. Spices of all descriptions grow here—the trees are wedged together—and the crowds of aerial spirits who frequent the thickets, pass each other with the uniformity of machinery, without confusion, like the traditions which have been handed down to us, from remote times, upon tables of stone.

[*Arrives at the hermitage.*

*Prince.* Oh, meek recluse, who findeth pleasure in practising the duties of religion—master of this holy dwelling—pray tell me if you are happy and in health.

*Hermit.* Whence does my lord come, who fearlessly enters this enclosure armed with a flying spear?

*Prince.* I will tell you, holy man. The golden ear listened to the misrepresentations of a foolish astrologer concerning the queen of the royal heir, the mother of Mounng Gyew, who is a lesser spirit; and as she was near losing her life, she abandoned her little son, and quitted the city of Pyentsa, which is the cause of my coming here armed with bow, spear, and sword.

*Hermit.* Hist, Hist! Do not follow her; do you think the road is easily traversed? the way is most frightful. Oh what a savage road it is, rocks, hills, and precipices; the air is stagnant; thorns and briars lie scattered in the path, and vast creepers entwine themselves (among the trees); and beasts of prey abound every where. Oh! do not go, my lord, for this is not all; what numbers of enemies you will meet with!—beyond the (dense jungle) about twelve miles, there are speckled monsters which lie (in wait) across the road to devour you; oh, do not go. Besides these there are other obstacles, there is a stream of copper, which burns to atoms; beyond this about twelve miles there is a frightful devil which will instantly devour you, for there will be no one to help you; if my habitation were near, the

monster would respect my presence—Oh, my lord, each step of the road is a great grandfather to the last passed over ; do not go.

*Prince.* If I do not meet with Maydow of the silver mountain, though nine or ten worlds may have passed by, yet I shall not think of returning.

*Hermit.* My lord, as sure as that the castanets direct the measure of the song, so surely is your highness leaping into the mouth of the tiger.

*Prince.* If I do not meet with Maydow of the silver mountain, I would not think of returning, though hell itself were before me.

*Hermit.* There are other Dwaynanhas in the south island besides the one of the silver mountain, cannot you search for one here ? Give me the magic bow which your highness carries, that good may come of the gift, and then depart on your journey back.

*Prince.* If your holiness requires the bow, take it.

*Hermit.* Astonishing ! surprising ! wonderful ! To look at it, it is but an insignificant thing ; but how heavy it is, and what strength it has !—I detained him because I thought he was one of the common order, but I now find he possesses many powers ; so many indeed, that he may travel in safety wheresoever he chooses, either on the air or under the earth. Let me see if I can find the ring and the drugs which the benefactress Manan entrusted to me—I will go and look for them !—Ah ! here they are—I bestow them upon your highness.

*Prince.* If your reverence's hair was more than three cubits in length, my obeisance would be still longer.

SONG.

[*The Prince arrives at the haunt of the devil.*

*Prince.* I will just sit down here, and take some betel leaf to refresh me.

*Devil.* My tribe have reigned in this Haywonta forest from the beginning—here have we held uninterrupted dominion, killed whatever we found, and eat it without cooking—our power, I fear, is about to be overturned. [*Sees the Prince,*] Oh, what is this ? a mortal or a spirit ? Didst thou arrive here by the road ? You are my victim.

*Prince.* Listen ! and I will tell you. I am neither a dragon nor a spirit, Pyentsa is my country ; Thoodanoo my name ; will you indeed eat me !—look at my sword, foolish devil !

*Devil.* Tush ! Tush ! Your sword is only a hand's breadth—you are unarmed—you are like the flimsy paper which is tough in the sunshine, but which falls to pieces in the rain.

*Prince.* Listen, devil ! Your pride is excessive ; if you do not retreat, you will be slain.

*Devil.* Attend, prince ! Whoever enters this forest of Haywonta, must acknowledge my power, and become my prey. [*Music.*]

*Devil.* Oh, prince, make me your slave.

*Prince.* Forest king, are we not near the cane barrier and the copper stream ? conduct me past them.

## SONG.

[*The devil conducts the prince.*]

*Devil.* Oh, good prince, if anything happens to you, remember to call upon me for aid, I will now return to my post.

## SONG.

*Prince.* The silver mountain towards which my face is now turned, is still distant ; my good genius is forsaking me, and my bad fate is leaving me a prisoner in this wilderness of dangers.

## SONG.

*The Prince arrives at a gigantic thorn tree, upon which are sitting two monstrous birds, with faces like mortals.*

*Female bird* [*to her mate.*] We have satisfied our hunger to-day upon the flesh of lions, elephants, and deer ; what I wonder shall we find to-morrow ?

*Male bird.* Beautiful is thy speckled plumage ; to-morrow the princess of the silver mount will bathe and anoint her head. I smell the food preparing for the feast ; there will be more than I can devour—I will keep some in my pouch for you.

*Prince.* Oh, powerful birds which roost upon this immense thorn tree !—

*Male Bird.* Since I first alighted upon this tree, I have never heard the human voice. What art thou ?

*Prince.* Oh, mighty bird, listen, and I will tell—assist me to reach the silver mountain, and I will repay your favour.

*Bird.* Be not concerned, for I will give you the help you ask, young prince ;—neither horse nor elephant assisted you to make the

journey thus far—only your own perseverance ; my mate is sick, but I will take you upon my back.

[*The Bird carries the Prince.*

*Prince.* Oh Bounmadee ! thou mighty bird, alight under the shadow of these banyan trees, and leave me alone.

ACT.

SCENE 1st.—*City of the Silver Mountain.*

*King.* Millions of nobles, wearers of the golden chains of nobility, who follow behind me—my daughter Devay Manan having returned from the country of mortals, will bathe and anoint herself ; appoint therefore 500 beautiful maids with budding breasts, to take each nine golden goblets, and go in procession to the east side of the city, to draw water for the ceremony.

*Noble.* My lord, we attend. Let Maensa be appointed directress of the procession. [*To Maensa*]. Go forth to the lake without the walls to the east of the city, and draw water for the approaching ceremony.

SCENE 2nd.—*Procession of Women.*

SONG.

*Maensa.* Ladies, under the shade of those banyan trees before us I see a young (Nat) spirit sitting, if he calls answer him not ; she that transgresses shall pay a fine of five tecals.

*Prince.* Lovely palace damsels, if you have with you a little betel leaf, I entreat you to give me some.

*One of the ladies.* Do not be concerned, my lord, for betel leaf ; if you desire it, I will give myself to you.

*Prince.* Oh deities, angels, and spirits ! let this ring which I drop into the water reach the hand of my beautiful Manan !

[*He assists a maid to place the vessel of water upon her head and drops the ring into it.*]

SCENE 3rd.—*The Palace.*

*Manan* (*while washing finds the ring.*) Ladies, tell me if any thing happened at the lake, when the procession went out to draw water.

*Maensa.* Under the shade of the banyan trees which grow there we found a young spirit resting himself, and he assisted one of the maids to place the water vessel upon her head.

*Manan.* Oh my husband, come and take me !



The news of the young prince's arrival being communicated to the king, he is very angry that a mortal should presume to enter his country and lay claim to his daughter ; he therefore orders that he be made to ride upon some wild horses and elephants, and the young prince acquitting himself surprisingly well in training them, the king promises to give him his daughter, if he can shoot an arrow from one of the bows of the palace. The prince shoots an arrow with ease and dexterity ; but the king insists upon another trial—he obliges the prince to select the little finger of Manan from amongst those of her sisters, which are thrust to him through a screen ; this also the prince does, by the assistance of the King of Nats.

ART. II.—*On the Bora Chung, or Ground Fish of Bootan.*

*To the Secretaries to the Asiatic Society.*

GENTLEMEN,—The following account of the *Bora Chung* or as it may be called, the Ground-Fish of Bootan, is so extraordinary, as to be worthy I think of the attention of the Asiatic Society, for so far as I know it is new. I am indebted for it to Mr. Russell, of Rungpore.

The *Bora Chung* is a thick cylindrical fish, with a body somewhat like a pike but thicker, with a snub nose, and grows from three pounds weight, to a length of two feet. The colour is olive green, with orange stripes ; and the head speckled with crimson spots. It is eaten by the natives of Bootan, and said to be delicious.

The *Bora Chung* is found in Bootan, on the borders of the Chail Nuddee, which falls into the river Dhallah, a branch of which runs into the Teestah at Paharpore. It is not immediately on the brink of the water, however, that the fish is caught, but in perfectly dry places, in the middle of a grass jungle, sometimes as far as two miles from the river. The natives search this jungle till they find a hole, about four or five inches in diameter, and into it they insert a stick to guide their digging a well, which they do till they come to the water ; a little cow-dung is then thrown into the water, when the fish rises to the surface. Mr. Russell has known them to be from six to nineteen feet deep in the earth.

Mr. Russell describes their other habits as not less curious. They are invariably found in pairs, two in each hole ; never more nor less. He has not met with any less than three to four pounds ; but as before said, they grow to the length of two feet. He has seen them go along the ground, with a serpentine motion, very fast, though the natives say they never voluntarily rise above the surface. In some